

LAURA BURNS: Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Laura Burns. I'm a field organization with Moms Clean Air Force. I'm also a toxicologist, a Republican and a conservative Christian. On top of all that, I'm a parent. And as a parent, I understand these decisions you face are often quite heavy, but I also ask that while you make these decisions you consider the health of the children who will be affected by them for the remainder of their lives. President Obama has publicly acknowledged the need for America to reduce our emissions. In addition, to overusing fossil fuels that pollute our atmosphere by adding climate driving chemicals, we have chosen to turn a blind eye to the environmental damage that is created. For too long, piecemeal evaluations and lease-by-lease comparisons to global greenhouse gas concentrations misrepresent the nature of a very real climate crisis and thereby downplay the extent to which coal leasing contributes to the problem. We can no longer accept this naive view of what coal pollution does to our environment, our health and our economies. When our environment is damaged, our climate is damaged. Already, 2016 had been the hottest year on record. Pollution from coal is a great contributor. In January 2015 a peer-reviewed study in Nature concluded that in order to avoid the worst effects of climate change, one third of all oil reserves, half of all gas reserves and more than 80 percent of coal reserves worldwide must remain in the ground through 2050. We ask that the BLM address the evident inconsistency between the conclusions of the best available climate science and the agency's continued expansion of the Federal Coal Program. Thank you.